



Lesson 01: Evolution of Desires.

The history of the universe can be divided into discrete eras, beginning with the formation of the universe and planet Earth, followed by the development of an incredible array of vegetation, and then the appearance of animal life ranging from amoebas to elephants. Just a few tens of thousands of years ago, prehistoric man emerged from the animal level, but developed animal characteristics to unique degrees that set the human species apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. This ushered in a new era where the predominant feature is man's impact on his physical and social environment.

The transitions between each of these eras, from Still to Vegetative to Animate and Speaking (Human), were times of temperature extremes, cataclysms of various sorts and the rapid extinction of some species as new life forms emerged. It is almost as if every time a new level of existence appeared, a massive change was required in order to give birth to the new era.

If instead of looking at these events as discrete incidents, we begin to view them as a logical continuum of events, a question appears. What is causing each new level of existence to come into being? We find the answer if we view history from the perspective of the development of *desire* as opposed to sheer randomness and coincidence. In the four above mentioned eras (Still, Vegetative, Animate and Speaking), we can identify a specific collection of desires for each and every level. For instance, on the level of Still, we primarily see a single desire – the desire to remain motionless. Anything that does not satisfy that desire is met with resistance and requires energy to overcome.

If we explore the Vegetative level, we see an expansion in both the number and intensity of desires. While the desire of the rock is to stay the way it is, a plant has an inherent desire to grow. While the Still level has a singular desire, plants have many desires, including desires for water, warmth, reproduction and to receive sunlight for photosynthesis. These may not be conscious in the same way we think of "desires" in humans, but they are the motivating factors that make a plant do what a plant does.

A quick look at the Animate level shows us that all the desires from the Still and Vegetative levels remain in some fashion (e.g. rest, growth and nutrition), but an entirely new set of desires unknown to objects on the Vegetative or Still levels begin to emerge: desires to be mobile, to have a certain level of independence, and to have a social structure of some sort.



Finally, in the Speaking level, we find all of the above desires along with desires for more precise means of communications, more complex social structures, possession of goods and property, a need for a sense of self worth, and desires for knowledge and beauty. Our efforts to satisfy these desires have resulted in humanity's advancement throughout history in arts, education, science, communications, exploration and technology.

Speaking	Speaking
	Animate
	Vegetative
	Still
Animate	Speaking
	Animate
	Vegetative
	Still
Vegetative	Speaking
	Animate
	Vegetative
	Still
Still	Speaking
	Animate
	Vegetative
	Still

As desires change, something else is required. In order to be able to tell whether a desire has been fulfilled or not, each level of existence must have “senses” that are tuned to detect the pleasures of each desire. Thus, each level has senses that precisely correspond to the desires that exist on that level. This means that where an oak tree has senses that detect heat, water, sun and growth, a dog has senses of smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch that enable it to receive pleasure from the scents in the backyard, eating its dinner, and seeing and hearing its owner. With additional desires and senses, each level is able to relate to its external environment in a more personal manner.

If we look more closely at this time continuum of history as a continuous development of desire, a pattern begins to take shape. We discover this same pattern within each level, so there is a Still, Vegetative, Animate and Speaking degree within the Still level, and also within the Vegetative level, within the Animate level and within the

Speaking level. It is not that the rock contains a plant or an animal inside of it, or that the rock will turn into a plant. What we are referring to here is that the *level of desire* that initially gave rise to the phenomena we perceive as “rocks” evolves, until what is perceived is on the level of plants rather than rocks. Nothing is lost, however, and the level of desire corresponding to rocks is still present and a new level of desire is added on top of it.



But this brings up another question. If the Still level contains degrees of still, vegetative, animate and speaking, then why aren't we able to observe these sub-desires in a rock? An analogy from human reproduction can help us understand this. A newly fertilized egg contains everything that is required for the development of the future human being, but it is all in potential. Each part will only be activated when the growing embryo has reached the right stage of development for that particular aspect of the body.

In the same way, the Still level contains desires of the vegetative, animate and speaking levels, but only in potential. Until the desires that are present in the Still level develop to the right stage, though, these degrees are present but inactive. Once the overall desire grows to the right intensity, the desires contained within the next degree will begin to be activated. Just as the baby is born once it is fully developed, the complete development of the desires results in the "birth" of the next level.

The implications of this structure are profound. This means that just as the human embryo contains the entire blueprint to create a person and will never create a dog or a rosebush, the entirety of all of creation is contained in the initial blueprint of the Still level. The sequence of activation is also already set. Just as the heart, lungs, brain, arms, and legs of babies always develop in exactly the same sequence, the Still, Vegetative, Animate and Speaking degrees will always appear in this order within each level. In other words, we can use this pattern to understand where we came from and where we are heading.

With this in mind, let's take a closer look at the evolution of the level we called "Speaking": the level of human beings. Just a few thousand years ago, our ancestors were more than satisfied with a warm, dry place to sleep at night; a family; a few nuts or roots for a meal; and perhaps an occasional piece of meat. Yet what was considered a luxurious life a few hundred years ago would be considered bare subsistence today, and things that were not even imagined a hundred years ago are now considered necessities. Modern societies could not exist without automobiles, the Internet, and jet airplanes. Just ask any teenager if he or she could make it through the day without a cell phone! So what has happened?

Once again, the answer lies in the development of desires. For thousands of years of human evolution, the challenge was simply to survive. Satisfying the daily requirements of life (food, safety, and family) consumed all of a person's energy during a very short lifetime. Being inherently social creatures, people discovered that it was easier to survive in communities, and tribes were formed. This then led to villages, towns and cities.

As we have seen, desires are constantly growing, and the new communal living structures gave rise to new desires. These desires were not directly related to survival, but were meaningful only in the context of society: what do I have compared to my neighbor? The concepts of money and possession became important beyond their ability to help make life comfortable. Instead, they are used to provide a sense of self worth: if I have more than others, then I am better than they are.



Social desires are not limited to ownership of material goods. People became concerned about their position within the community. What do others think about me? Do I have a position that brings with it a certain status? These questions became of paramount importance as desires for respect, power and honor emerged. As you can see, all of these desires only have relevance in relation to other people. Someone stranded on a desert island has no need for money, an excessively large house, or a prestigious job title.

Yet while the types and intensity of desires that humans experience may have evolved, all of these pleasures are still experienced through the same senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch that virtually every mammal has. So where is the new set of senses we said characterize every new level? What differentiates the Speaking level from the Animate?

Speaking	Speaking	Spiritual Desires
	Animate	
	Vegetative	
	Still	
Animate	Speaking	Corporeal Desires
	Animate	
	Vegetative	
	Still	
Vegetative	Speaking	
	Animate	
	Vegetative	
	Still	
Still	Speaking	
	Animate	
	Vegetative	
	Still	

If we are honest, the difference between animals (especially primates) and humans is very narrow and hard to define. Science is discovering that many of the traits once claimed as uniquely human are present in varying degrees in other animals as well: emotions, language, social organization, and reasoning capabilities. So where is the inherently new level of existence in the Speaking degree? Actually, human beings are not on the Speaking level: they are the Speaking sub-level within the Animate level. Despite the fact that we already have this ability called “speech,” the true Speaking level is still ahead of

us.



Just as a plant cannot begin to imagine the pleasures that an animal experiences, humans cannot begin to imagine the myriad of desires and pleasures that await us on the true Speaking level of existence. We call these new, unknown desires “spiritual desires.” As of yet, they exist only in potential, but they are slowly beginning to awaken within us. Just as there was no choice in the growth of desires from Still to Vegetative to Animate, we have no choice in the appearance of these new Speaking level desires.

While we don’t really understand these desires yet, we feel them as vague longings for something we can’t quite identify. We may try to satisfy them through the tried and true pleasures that we are used to, but when this doesn’t work, it creates a void within us. Often times, this void is expressed through behavior problems, violence or the number one epidemic in the world today – depression.

Yet, there is hope. If we can begin to understand what is occurring and why, meaning that this constantly expanding desire is ushering us into a new level of existence, then we can begin to define a new goal for each and every one of us. And just as the difference between the pleasures of the animate level are remarkably different and richer than the pleasures of the vegetative level, the promises of untold fulfillments from this future level of existence lie before us, pulling us closer to it as if it were a magnet.

In upcoming articles, we will examine the impact that this as yet unfulfilled desire has on us, as well as the promise of the pleasures that are waiting for us when we reach this future level of existence. But first, we need to understand how we currently operate in order to find where the true problem lies. We will explore this concept in our next article – the operating program of society.